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A Botanical Tramp in North Carolina.

BY GERALD M'CARTHY.

Of all the districts the Washington botanist has to choose from, the amphibious section along the Atlantic coast, southward of Norfolk, including the great Dismal Swamp, is the most interesting, especially in its summer flora.

Having decided to collect in this region, June 22, 1884, found me at Norfolk, Va., with a store of drying paper and presses prepared to

> " Botanize for summer months three,
> Maugre the doughty mosquito and all that with him might be."

Norfolk is a most malodorous town and an excellent place to avoid at this season of the year. Some good sedges are found hereabouts, but as my visit was too early for them I secured scarcely anything worth mentioning.

The next morning found me aboard the small steamer "Newbern" bound across Carrituck and Albemarle Sounds, for the Alligator River and Lake Mattamusket, in Hyde county, North Carolina. The course of the steamer lay so far from these points, however, and transportation was so difficult to procure, that I found it expedient to change my plans somewhat, and to begin with the Tar River country of North Carolina. The port at the mouth of Tar River, whither our steamer was bound, proved to be a straggling, untidy town of some 2,000 inhabitants.

The Tar River, so called, I presume, from the large amount of pine tar which is floated to market on its waters, is a good sized stream, as yellow as the Tiber from the clay brought down from its head waters. The country on both sides of the river resembles that bordering on the lower Potomac, and the two floras have many things in common. Here, however, we find the dominating *Taxodium distichum*, with its accompanying parasite *Tillandsia usneoides* hanging in mossy festoons from the scantily foliaged branches. Its light gray color contrasting with the sombre hue of the cypress gives to the country the appearance of having but recently emerged from a Noachian bath—a suggestion that seems to be well borne out by the superabundance of water everywhere present.

The Magnolias, both *glauca* and *grandiflora*, flourish luxuriantly. The handsome *Cyrilla racemiflora* is very abundant in the swamps; as is *Gordonia Lasianthus*, and *Stuartia Virginica*, which vie with the Magnolias in the gorgeousness of their blooms. *Clethra alnifolia* is everywhere, and loads the air heavily with its perfume. *Callicarpa Americana*, *Itea Virginica*, *Physostegia Virginica*, *Nesæa verticillata*, *Asclepias paupercula*, *Mikania scandens*, and the Carolina Rose, are the most common of the smaller plants. In the water are found *Nymphæa tuberosa*, *Nelumbium luteum*, *Nuphar advena*, *Pontederia*, and *Sagittaria*. *Sorghum Halapense*, *Arundinaria macrosperma*, *Tripsacum dactyloides*, *Zizania aquatica*, and a small variety of *Elymus Virginicus* are the principal grasses. *Scirpus pungens*, *S. lacustris*, *Carex glaucescens*, *Scleria triglomerata*, and *Dichromena leucocephala* and *D. latifolia* are abundant, though my visit was rather too early to get good specimens of any of them.

I kept a sharp look-out for *Dionæa muscipula*, but failed to observe it, though I afterward found it at a point about forty-five miles distant. The insectivorous plants are well represented by *Sarracenia purpurea*, *S. flava* and *Drosera longifolia*.

The mistletoe, *Phoradendron flavescens*, is quite abundant, but appears to have a decided partiality for shade trees along the principal streets of the towns.

This village, in common with most others of this wet district, was suffering from a plethora of shade. The streets are usually lined with wide spreading gums, whose branches often form leafy arches over the street on one side and over the roofs of the low-built houses on the other, shutting out the health-giving sunshine. The roofs become moss-covered, and the bed-rooms are pervaded with dampness. Can any one marvel, then, that ague, rheumatism, and malaria should be the scourge of this section? The trunks of these trees are invariably open, exposing the hollow, blackened interior; their boughs are usually knotted into fantastic, and often weird shapes, and from many abraded swellings ooze drops of amber gum.

GENERAL NOTES.

Poisonous Plants.—1. *Cicuta maculata*, L. Paul was a healthy and strong boy of fifteen years, living at Duck Creek, Brown county, Wisconsin. While making a bridge over a small creek on his father's farm, with his younger brothers, one day about the middle of June, he ate the whole root and the lowest part of the stem, about four inches in length, of a young and large water-hemlock. He tried to induce his brothers to do the same, as it tasted like turnips. They, however, only chewed bits of the root and spit them out. Paul